ශ්‍රී ලංකා විභාග දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව
இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

අධ්‍යයන පොදු සහතික පත්‍ර (උසස් පෙළ) විභාගය, 2023(2024)
கல்விப் பொதுத் தராதரப் பத்திர (உயர் தர)ப் பரீட்சை, 2023(2024)
General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination, 2023(2024)

ඉංග්‍රීසි I
ஆங்கிலம் I
English I

73 E I

පැය තුනයි
மூன்று மணித்தியாலம்
Three hours

අමතර කියවීම් කාලය - මිනිත්තු 10 යි
மேலதிக வாசிப்பு நேரம் - 10 நிமிடங்கள்
Additional Reading Time - 10 minutes

Use the **additional reading time** to go through the question paper, select the questions you will answer, and decide which of them you will prioritise.

Instructions:

- *Answer all the questions in* **Part A** *and* **Part B**.
- *The texts you choose to answer questions from* **Part A** ***must not be*** *the same as those you answer from* **Part B**.
- *Write the number and letter of each question clearly.*

Part A

[*This part carries* **32 marks**. *Each question carries* **08 marks**.]

1. Comment briefly on any **one** of the following passages, explaining its significance to the play from which it is taken.

(a) You make it seem like we were setting a trap.
All pretty girls are a trap, a pretty trap, and men expect them to be.
Now look at yourself, young lady. This is the prettiest you will ever be! I've got to fix myself now! You're going to be surprised by your mother's appearance!

(b) These three have robbed me, and this demi-devil
(For he's a bastard one) had plotted with them
To take my life. Two of these fellows you
Must know and own; this thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine.

(c) You must understand one thing. We own nothing except ourselves. This world and its laws, allows us nothing, except ourselves. There is nothing we can leave behind when we die, except the memory of ourselves.

(d) And for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath,
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more.
For such things in a false, disloyal knave
Are tricks of custom; but in a man that's just
They're close dilations working from the heart,
That passion cannot rule.

(e) (Speaking with great deference.) Good evening. I'm sorry to bother you, but we just thought we'd better let you know that we haven't got anything left. We sent up all we had. There's no more food down here.

[see page two

2. Comment briefly on any **one** of the following passages, explaining its significance to the novel from which it is taken.

(a) We live by our labours from one harvest to the next, there is no certain telling whether we shall be able to feed ourselves and our children, and if bad times are prolonged we know we must see the weak surrender their lives and this fact, too, is within our experience. In our lives there is no margin for misfortune.

(b) Who would doubt at that moment that I had indeed come as close to the great hub of things ... ? I would suppose, then, that as I stood there pondering the events of the evening – those that had unfolded and those still in the process of doing so – they appeared to me a sort of summary of all that I had come to achieve thus far in my life. I can see few other explanations for that sense of triumph I came to be uplifted by that night.

(c) The world isn't just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no? And in understanding something, we bring something to it, no? Doesn't that make life a story?

(d) Are you afraid – Her gaze sprang with laughing tears as if her own venom had been spat at her; he and she were amazed at her, at this aspect of her, appearing again as the presumptuous stranger in their long acquaintance. Are you afraid I'm going to tell her something?
Giddied, he gave up a moment's purchase of ground.
What you can tell? His anger struck him in the eyes.

(e) Just a sense of what might have been with me! My life looks as if it had been wasted for want of chances! When I see what you know, what you have read, and seen, and thought, I feel what a nothing I am! I'm like the poor Queen of Sheba who lived in the Bible. There is no more spirit in me.

3. Comment briefly on the following passage, explaining its significance to the short story from which it is taken.

> You said no the following four days to going out with him, because you were uncomfortable with the way he looked at your face, that intense, consuming way he looked at your face that made you say goodbye to him but also made you reluctant to walk away. And then, the fifth night, you panicked when he was not standing at the door after your shift. You prayed for the first time in a long time and when he came up behind you and said hey, you said yes, you would go out with him, even before he asked. You were scared he would not ask again.

4. Comment briefly on the following extract, explaining its significance to the poem from which it is taken.

> Don't write in English, they said, English is
> Not your mother-tongue. Why not leave
> Me alone, critics, friends, visiting cousins,
> Every one of you? Why not let me speak in
> Any language I like? The language I speak,
> Becomes mine, its distortions, its queernesses
> All mine, mine alone.
> It is half English, half Indian, funny perhaps, but it is honest

[see page three

Part B

[*This part carries* **68** **marks**. *Each question carries* **17** **marks**.]

5. Drama

Answer any ***one*** *of the following questions. Do* ***not*** *answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question* **1** *of* ***Part A*** *above.*

(a) "The central conflict of the play . . . is neither between white and black alone, nor merely between men and women – the conflict is about a black man and a white woman." Discuss Shakespeare's play ***Othello*** in relation to this claim.

(b) "In the final analysis, ***The Glass Menagerie*** is all about individuals' failure to fulfil their responsibilities to their families, their society and, most importantly, to themselves." Critically examine Tennessee Williams' play ***The Glass Menagerie*** in light of this statement.

(c) "Prospero and Caliban can not only exchange places as hero and villain, but also vie with each other to occupy both places at once", because ***The Tempest*** permits "radically different interpretation, characteristics and emphases". Comment on this analysis of Shakespeare's play ***The Tempest***.

(d) "Identity is both performed, hence flexible, and conferred at birth, hence fixed." Critically explore Athol Fugard et al's ***Sizwe Bansi is Dead*** with specific reference to this statement.

(e) Write a critical introduction to Harold Pinter's play ***The Dumb Waiter***, focusing on socio-political themes that resonate for a contemporary audience.

6. Novel

Answer any ***one*** *of the following questions. Do* ***not*** *answer the question which is based on the text you selected in question* **2** *of* ***Part A*** *above.*

(a) "Ishiguro's ***The Remains of the Day*** is a novel about regret, which, in Stevens' words, comes about mainly because he didn't know that 'small incidents would render whole dreams forever irredeemable.'" Use this insight to explain the nature of regret in Ishiguro's novel.

(b) "Tess could have had a different fate had she been a wealthy man! Neither her society nor her social conventions would have made a single impact on how her life would have panned out, had her gender and status changed." Do you agree with this statement on Thomas Hardy's ***Tess of the d'Urbervilles***?

(c) "***Life of Pi*** is a treatise on the many ways friendship is sustained. It allows you to forgive opportunistic moments in a friendship and to accept and celebrate the altruistic moments that nourish the same relationship." Critically examine Yan Martel's novel ***Life of Pi*** in relation to this description.

(d) "***Nectar in a Sieve*** is a strong commentary on South Asian poverty, which is a result of not only economic disparity but also of gender inequality and rigidly assigned gender roles." Do you agree? Discuss Kamala Markandaya's novel, ***Nectar in a Sieve,*** in light of this analysis.

(e) "In ***July's People***, Nadine Gordimer does not imagine a full-fledged post-apartheid South Africa; rather, she merely outlines possibilities for a more equal co-existence between blacks and whites, and in this process she is very conscious of their huge cultural and ideological differences." Examine Gordimer's novel, ***July's People,*** in relation to this statement.

[see page four

7. Short Story

(a) Discuss the impact of **socio-economic class hierarchies** in **three** short stories in your syllabus, focusing specifically on how these hierarchies move the plot forward.

OR

(b) Examine how **love** is portrayed in **two** short stories in your syllabus, choosing one written by a woman and one written by a man. Identify and analyse the differences, if any, in the representation and treatment of love in these two texts.

OR

(c) Identify the short story that, in your view, provides the best critical analysis of **women's resistance to gender norms,** and write a short introduction to the story, highlighting this aspect. Note that you first need to justify your selection of the story through a brief comparison with the other stories in your syllabus.

8. Poetry

(a) Examine how poets contrast **urban and rural life and values,** providing detailed examples from **at least three** poems.

OR

(b) Critically examine how **protest and struggle** are portrayed in **at least three** poems from your syllabus, paying special attention to similarities and differences in their treatment of these themes.

OR

(c) Critically analyse **one** of the following:

(i) The descriptions of **beauty**, both natural and human-made, in **at least three** prescribed poems.

(ii) The treatment of **nostalgia** in **two** poems in your syllabus, choosing one written by a woman and one written by a man.

(iii) **Any three** poems written by poets from three different countries, which focus on **crisis**, highlighting differences in their treatment of this theme.

* * *

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இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

අධ්‍යයන පොදු සහතික පත්‍ර (උසස් පෙළ) විභාගය, 2023(2024)
கல்விப் பொதுத் தராதரப் பத்திர (உயர் தர)ப் பரீட்சை, 2023(2024)
General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination, 2023(2024)

ඉංග්‍රීසි II
ஆங்கிலம் II
English II

73 E II

පැය තුනයි
மூன்று மணித்தியாலம்
Three hours

අමතර කියවීම් කාලය - මිනිත්තු 10 යි
மேலதிக வாசிப்பு நேரம் - 10 நிமிடங்கள்
Additional Reading Time - 10 minutes

Use the **additional reading time** to go through the question paper, select the questions you will answer, and decide which of them you will prioritise.

Instructions:

※ *This question paper consists of* ***four*** *questions.* ***All*** *questions are compulsory.*

1. Write a composition on **ONE** of the following topics, paying attention to relevant facts and supporting evidence, structure, organization, coherent argument, accurate language and expression. (30 marks)

(1) "The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past." How useful is this insight in understanding the post-war context in Sri Lanka?

(2) "75 years after independence, school education in Sri Lanka still demonstrates urban privilege and rural disadvantage." Do you agree?

(3) Write a story that incorporates the idea "the violence was utterly unnecessary, but not surprising at all."

(4) Write a review of a film that sensitively portrays economic exploitation and class hierarchies in South Asia.

(5) Write a report on the effects of climate change on Sri Lanka.

2. Reading comprehension and précis.

(a) Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it. (10 marks)

(1) The Ancient, Aryan and Revised Ancient Models share one paradigm, that of the possibility of diffusion of language or culture through conquest. Interestingly, this goes against the dominant trend in archaeology today, which is to stress indigenous development. [. . .]

(2) The 19th and 20th centuries have been dominated by the paradigms of progress and science. There is the belief that most disciplines made a huge leap into "modernity" or "true science" followed by steady, cumulative, scholarly progress. [. . .] To these 19th century German and British scholars, the stories of Egyptian colonization and the civilizing of Greece[1] violated "racial science" as monstrously as the legends of sirens and centaurs[2] broke the canons of natural science. Thus, **all were equally discredited** and discarded.

(3) For the past 150 years, historians have claimed to possess a "method" similar to that of natural science. However, following the "scientific" historians of the 19th and 20th centuries, today the charge of "**unsound** methodology" is used to condemn not merely incompetent but also **unwelcome** work. [. . .] Criticisms of this kind lead to the question of positivism and its requirement of "proof". Proof or certainty is difficult enough to achieve, even in the

1. The strong Egyptian influence on Greek religion, culture, art and philosophy was flatly denied by 19th century scholars, in large part due to entrenched racial prejudice which could not accept that the Europeans had anything to learn from non-Europeans.
2. Two mythical beasts popularly described in Mediaeval European literature, art and religion.

[see page two

experimental sciences or documented history. In fields such as archaeology of the distant past, with which this work is concerned, it is out of the question: all one can hope to find is more or less plausibility. [. . .]

④ 20th century prehistory has been continually troubled by a particular form of this search for proof, which I shall call **"archaeological positivism"**[3]. It is a fallacy that presumes that dealing with "objects" makes one "objective"; the belief that interpretations of archaeological evidence are as solid as the archaeological finds themselves. This faith elevates hypotheses based on archaeology to a "scientific" status and demotes information from the past from other sources – legends, place names, religious cults, language and the distribution of linguistic and script dialects. While all these sources must be treated with great caution, evidence from them is not categorically less valid than that from archaeology

⑤ The favourite tool of the archaeological positivists is the **"argument from silence"**: the belief that if something has not been found, it cannot have existed in significant quantities. [. . .] But, in nearly all archaeology – as in the natural sciences – it is virtually impossible to prove absence.

⑥ It will probably be argued that this criticism is against straw men, or at least dead men: "Modern archaeologists are much too sophisticated to be so positivist", and "no serious scholar today believes in the existence, let alone the importance, of 'race'." Both statements may be true, but what is claimed here is that modern archaeologists and ancient historians are still working with models set up by men who were crudely positivist and racist.

Adapted from Bernal, Martin. *Black Athena* [540 words]

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in your answer script against the **number of the relevant question**.

(1) According to the passage, the three historical models discussed in paragraph 1 share the common theory that

(a) language or culture is spread through conquest.
(b) it is wrong to believe that language or culture is spread through conquest.
(c) conquest is one way in which language or culture is spread.
(d) the victors in wars have a paradigm possibility to spread their language or culture.

(2) What, according to the author, follows from the belief that adherence to science and progress [paragraph 2] has caused great improvements to the discipline of archaeology?

(a) The methods and theories of natural science should govern archaeology.
(b) Modernity is a result of the huge leap into true science.
(c) Racial science, like natural science cannot be violated.
(d) All previous methods of archaeology needed to be discredited and discarded.

(3) In the phrase **"all were equally discredited"** as used in paragraph 2, **"all"** refers to

(a) religious cults, legends, place names, language and the distribution of linguistic and script dialects.
(b) stories of Egyptian colonization and the civilizing of Greece.
(c) perceived violations of "racial science" as well as the myths that contradicted natural science.
(d) 19th century British and German scholars.

3. In this context "positivism" refers to the theory that only 'factual' knowledge gained through sense experience (such as seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting) and which can be measured, is reliable. Therefore, researchers are expected to collect and interpret data objectively, and often quantifiably, and it is only such 'proof' that is considered to be acceptable.

[see page three

(4) Which of the following is an example of rejecting research that is "**unwelcome**" [paragraph 3] on the basis that its methods are "**unsound**"?

(a) Denying validity to research that is seen as reinforcing dominant historical narratives.
(b) Devaluing scholarship that is based on archaeological objects.
(c) Supporting only mainstream research that reinforces nationalist paradigms.
(d) Discrediting studies that propose unpopular conclusions by claiming that they are unscientific.

(5) "**Archaeological positivism**" [paragraph 4] is a fallacy because

(a) objectivity is seen to be derived from the fact that conclusions are drawn only from objects.
(b) it elevates archaeological assumptions to the level of scientific truth.
(c) it demotes other information from the past.
(d) of all of the above.

(6) The phrase "**the argument from silence**" [paragraph 5] is best demonstrated in which of the following conclusions?

(a) If the athlete hasn't done well in today's race, it means that he hasn't trained well.
(b) The politician was silent because he had no effective answer to the argument, and hence his silence signified agreement.
(c) There are no cigarette butts in hostel rooms which shows that students do not smoke.
(d) Because the child is not crying, she must be happy.

(7) Though the writer is at pains to make distinctions between archaeology and science, he

(a) makes an exception in relation to their shared difficulty to prove non-presence.
(b) attempts to make archaeology more scientific.
(c) believes that these differences can be resolved by re-orienting archaeology.
(d) argues that modern archaeologists and ancient historians are more scientific than their 19^{th} century counterparts.

(8) The author argues that even though modern archaeologists and ancient historians may be neither positivist nor racist themselves, they

(a) are still working to create new models.
(b) may reproduce both racism and positivism because they use models that are tainted.
(c) can still be held responsible for past models.
(d) are wrongly blamed for models they don't believe.

(9) The central argument of this excerpt is that

(a) archaeologists need to re-examine the theoretical models that they have inherited from their predecessors.
(b) racism and positivism have no role to play in modern archaeology.
(c) archaeology is not a natural science.
(d) the search for proof lies at the heart of the discipline of archaeology.

(10) The main objective of this passage is to

(a) criticize 19^{th} and 20^{th} century archaeologists.
(b) argue that archaeology should be more open to different kinds of evidence.
(c) explain archaeological positivism.
(d) refute the argument from silence.

[see page four

(b) Write a **précis**, summarising the passage given in question No. **2** above, following the instructions given below. **Use your own words as far as possible.** (20 marks)

(1) Begin the précis on a **new sheet**. Divide your page into **5 columns**, and number the lines.

(2) Write the précis within the following word range: **175—185** words.

(3) State the **number of words** you have used in your précis.

3. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. Provide specific examples from the text to support your point of view. (20 marks)

Free for All

In every city, town and village in the newly independent state, word went forth that anyone found begging on the street would be sent to jail. Arrests began immediately, causing a lot of public joy because the curse of beggary had at last been abolished.

Only the wandering minstrel Kabir was grief-stricken.

"What is the matter with you, weaver?" – because that is what he was by caste – asked the citizens.

"I am sad because cloth is woven with two threads. One runs horizontally, the other vertically. The arrests are horizontal, but feeding the hungry is vertical. How are you going to weave this fabric?"

A refugee from India, a lawyer by profession, was given ownership of two hundred abandoned handlooms. Kabir passed that way and began to weep.

"Are you crying because I have been given what by right should have been yours?" asked the lawyer.

"No, what made me cry was the knowledge that these looms will never weave cloth again, because you'll sell the thread for a profit. You have no patience with the clickety clack of a loom, but that noise is a weaver's only reason to live."

On the street a man was turning the printed leaves of a book into a paper bag.

Kabir picked one up and as he began to read the print, tears welled up in his eyes.

"What troubles you?" the astonished bag-maker asked.

"Inscribed on the paper out of which you have fashioned these bags is the mystic poetry of the blind Hindu saint, Bhagat Sur Das," answered Kabir.

The bag-maker didn't know any Hindi, but he did know that in his native Punjabi, Sur Das did not mean blind devotee, it meant pig.

"How can a pig be a saint?" he asked.

One of the most magnificent buildings in the city was adorned with a statute of the Hindu goddess of good fortune, Lakshmi. However, the new occupants, refugees from across the border, had covered it with an ugly length of cloth made from jute fibre. Kabir saw it and began to cry.

"Our religion forbids idolatry," they told him.

"Does is not forbid the degradation of beauty?" Kabir asked.

A general was addressing his troops. "We are short of food because our crops have been destroyed, but there's no cause for anxiety. My soldiers will fight the enemy on empty stomachs."

Slogans of the impending victory were raised.

"My valiant general, who will fight hunger?" Kabir asked. [. . .]

[see page five

A politician was addressing a crowd: "My dear brothers, our greatest problem is the recovery of our women abducted by our enemies across the border. If we do nothing, I fear they will all end up in the prostitutes' quarter. We must save them from this fate. I will call on you to take them into your homes. When you next think of a match for a member of your family, you should bear these unfortunate creatures in mind."

When Kabir heard these words, he wept inconsolably.

"Look at this good man," the leader told the crowd. "How deeply my appeal has moved him."

"No, your call did not move me," Kabir said: "I wept because I know that you have remained unmarried because you haven't yet found a rich bride."

"Throw this lunatic out," the crowd hissed.

Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the father of the nation, died. The country was plunged into mourning. Everyone went around with black armbands.

Kabir watched them in silence with tears rolling down his cheeks.

"So much cloth for so many armbands. It could have covered the hungry and the naked," he said to the mourners.

"You are a Communist," they said.

"You are a fifth columnist."

"You are a traitor to Pakistan."

And for the first time, Kabir laughed that day. "But my friends, I am wearing no armband, black, green or red."

Adapted from Manto, Saadat Hasan. "Free for All". Translated by Khalid Hasan.

(1) Compare the responses of the lawyer, the bag-maker, the general and the politician to Kabir's weeping. (03 marks)

(2) What does the following excerpt convey to you?
"One runs horizontally, the other vertically. The arrests are horizontal, but feeding the hungry is vertical. How are you going to weave this fabric?" (04 marks)

(3) Why do you think the crowd considered Kabir to be a lunatic, when he criticized the politician? (04 marks)

(4) How do Kabir's emotions function as a commentary on the key incidents in the story? How effective are his own explanations of his crying and laughter? (04 marks)

(5) What, in your view, are the main themes of this story? (05 marks)

4. Read the following poem and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. Provide specific examples from the text to support your point of view.
(20 marks)

The Nation of Birds

The nation of birds has no borders,
Nor a constitution.
All those who fly are its citizens,
Including poets.
Its flag is the wing.

[see page six

Have you ever heard a cuckoo
Quarrel with a nightingale over its song?
Or a crane driving a crow away
For its colour?
If the owl hoots, it is not because
It is jealous of the parrot.

Has an ostrich or a penguin
Ever complained they can't fly?

They begin chatting with the sky
As soon as they are born.
Clouds and rainbows descend
To stroke them; at times they lend
Their hues to the birds,
Like the cloud to the doves
Or the rainbow to the peacock.

They dream seated between
The sun and the moon. Then the sky
Fills with angels and stars.

They can see even in the dark,
Chat with elves and fairies.

They come down to earth to
Comfort the grass or to open
The flowers with their song.
The fruits and worms they eat
Burst out of their eggs with tiny wings.

One day I tried living as a bird.
I lost my nationality.

Nation is a cage. It feeds you
First for your song and when
It begins to dislike your song,
For your meat.

K. Satchidanandan (2021)

(1) In the first stanza what are the qualifications for being a citizen of the "nation of birds"? What are its symbols, if any? (03 marks)

(2) What do you understand by the following lines: "They dream seated between / The sun and the moon"? (04 marks)

(3) In this poem, how effective is the repeated use of examples of different species of birds? (04 marks)

(4) Throughout the poem there is an implied comparison between humans and birds. Identify and explain the main qualities that the poet compares. (04 marks)

(5) Critically analyse the poem's assessment of nations and nationalism. Do you agree with this analysis? (05 marks)

* * *